Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0600

Tomasetti, Glenys Ann (Glen)

(1929 - 2003)

Born	19290521, Melbourne Victoria Australia
Died	20030625, Melbourne Victoria Australia
Occupation	Novelist, Poet, Songwriter

Summary

Glen Tomasetti was born in Melbourne, Australia. An academically and musically gifted woman, she was well-known throughout the Australian folk music circuit, working on commercial television and cutting eleven albums in the 1960s. A left-leaning environmentalist and feminist, Glen was vehemently opposed to the Vietnam War and was a member of the Save Our Sons Movement in Victoria. In 1967 she made headlines when she was subpoenaed to court for withholding one-sixth of her income tax on the grounds that this was the exact proportion used by the Holt government to finance the war in Vietnam.

She became a hero of the feminist movement in 1969 when she adapted the words to an old shearing gang ballad, 'All among the wool boys'. Glen's version 'Don't be too Polite, Girls' was written to support the 1969 case for equal pay that was being heard by the high court.

Glen Tomasetti had three children and believed that motherhood was the emotional core of her life. She has been described as "a woman of singular passion that found focus in motherhood, friendship, art, the environment and justice for the oppressed. Her creativity was multifaceted. She was a historian, poet, novelist and actor. She was formidably intelligent and her god had bestowed on her extraordinary physical beauty."

Details

Don't Be Too Polite, Girls
Tune: All among the wool, boys
Lyrics: Glen Tomasetti

1. We're really on the way, girls, really on the way
Hooray for equal pay, girls, hooray for equal pay
They're going to give it to most of us, in spite of all their fears
But did they really need to make us wait for all those years?

Chorus: Don't be too polite, girls, don't be too polite,
Show a little fight, girls, show a little fight.
Don't be fearful of offending in case you get the sack
Just recognise your value and we won't look back.

2. I sew up shirts and trousers in the clothing trade
Since men don't do the job, I can't ask to be better paid
The people at the top rarely offer something more
Unless the people underneath are walking out the door.
Chorus

3. They say a man needs more to feed his children and his wife
Well, what are the needs of a woman who leads a double working life
When the whistle blows for knock-off it's not her time for fun
She goes home to start the job that's not paid and never done.
Chorus

4. Don't be too afraid, girls, don't be too afraid,
We're clearly underpaid girls, clearly underpaid.
Though equal pay in principle is every woman's right
To turn that into practice we must show a little fight.
Chorus

5. 'We can't afford to pay you,' say the masters in their wrath.
But woman says 'Just cut your coat according to the cloth.
If the economy won't stand it then here's your answer boys,
Cut out the wild extravagance on the new war toys.'
Chorus

6. All among the bull, girls, all among the bull,
Keep your hearts full, girls, keep your hearts full.
What good is a man as a doormat or following close at heel?
It's not their balls we're after, it's a fair square deal.
Chorus

Published resources

Book
Thoroughly decent people : a folktale, Tomasetti, Glen, 1976

Man of letters : a romance, Tomasetti, Glen, 1981

Newspaper Article
Brains, beauty and heart, Jones, Philip, 2003

A life's song for the heart and soul of Australia, Wright, Clare, 2003

Singer-writer Tomasetti dies, aged 74, Jackson, Andra, 2003

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Glen Tomasetti, author, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

National Library of Australia, Pictures Collection
Portrait of Glen Tomasetti at her home in Armadale Vic., July 1970 [picture] / Mark Strizic

Author Details
Anne Heywood and Nikki Henningham

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